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NEWS RELEASE

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Pro Bono Assistance Needed for Detained Individuals in South Florida

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) is requesting the assistance of legal practitioners in Florida to provide representation to individuals who are detained in immigration proceedings at the Krome Service Processing Center (SPC) and Turner Guilford Knight (TGK) Correctional Center in South Florida.

In a letter to legal organizations and immigration advocacy groups, Steven Lang, Coordinator of the Pro Bono Program at EOIR, stated that an unusually large number of individuals detained at Krome SPC and TGK Correctional Center are without legal representation at their immigration hearings. During the past 60 days, the Immigration Judges have continued the hearings of those aliens who have requested additional time to seek legal representation in addition to providing them with a list of free legal service providers. However, many detainees remain without legal representation.

EOIR is asking that attorneys in South Florida consider representing one or more of these detained individuals. EOIR is committed to facilitating these efforts. Those interested in assisting are asked to contact Steven Lang at (703) 605-1722 for further information.

Background

EOIR is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice that is responsible for developing policies and directing activities related to the conduct of administrative hearings and appellate reviews on a variety of immigration issues, including the determination of individuals' immigration status in the United States. EOIR is headed by a Director who reports to the Deputy Attorney General. Its organization includes the Board of Immigration Appeals and the Offices of the Chief Immigration Judge and the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer.

In April 2000, EOIR created the Pro Bono Program to improve access to legal advice and counseling and increase rates of representation for immigrants appearing before the Immigration Courts and Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). Current program initiatives include the BIA Pro Bono Project, Detention and Rights Presentations, Unaccompanied Juvenile Aliens in INS Custody, and the Model Hearing Program.

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